

Safety and Risk Management Newsletter



May 2017

Safe Outdoor Programs

We are now in full swing with outdoor programming as a YMCA. Programming including sports, pre-school programs, rentals at our camps and fitness classes all taking place. At your operation you want to do a detailed evaluation of the environment where your programs are occurring and ensure the programming can be delivered safely. Here are key areas to check;

- Sports fields should be evaluated for any depressions or rocks. Where possible minimize the hazard to keep children safe. Soccer goals should be anchored to the ground to prevent accidental tipping.
- Check your picnic tables and benches to confirm they are in good condition. Remove or repair any that are damaged.
- Walking paths should be free of trip fall hazards. The freeze and thaw cycle during winter may have created new hazards



since last fall.

- Outdoor basketball goals should have pads around the posts.
- Check the mulch on playgrounds to confirm proper coverage. Many of our operations use Day of Caring to update our playgrounds, in the mean time rake the mulch to the high impact areas where it is currently bare or minimal.
- Any trees damaged this winter should be evaluated by a professional prior to programming near them.

Keep Yourself Safe During Member and Guest Interactions

As a YMCA we serve thousands of people every day in our operations. Unfortunately some individuals come to the Y looking to steal and others resort to aggression or violence when they feel wronged. While we want to listen and try to rectify the situation, the safety of our YMCA staff team is paramount.

Educate your team on the following in order to keep them safe.

- In the event of a theft do not try to restrain or stop the offender. In an effort to get away they may assault you. Capture as much detail as possible and contact 911 with the description.



- If a fight occurs only try to break it up if the situation will not result in physical injury to the staff member. Get the names of the individuals involved so the Executive Director can suspend or revoke membership as appropriate. The police should be contacted as appropriate.
- If you have staff member that is receiving verbal abuse from a member or guest, they should politely walk away and inform a supervisor of the situation, especially if they fear for their safety. If the person still is abusive when talking to a supervisor, they should be informed the situation will not be resolved with their tone and it is time to leave the facility or 911 will be contacted.

Have a conversation with your staff on how to respond to difficult or violent situations. We want to ensure a safe working environment for our staff and it is important to prepare them for tough situations.